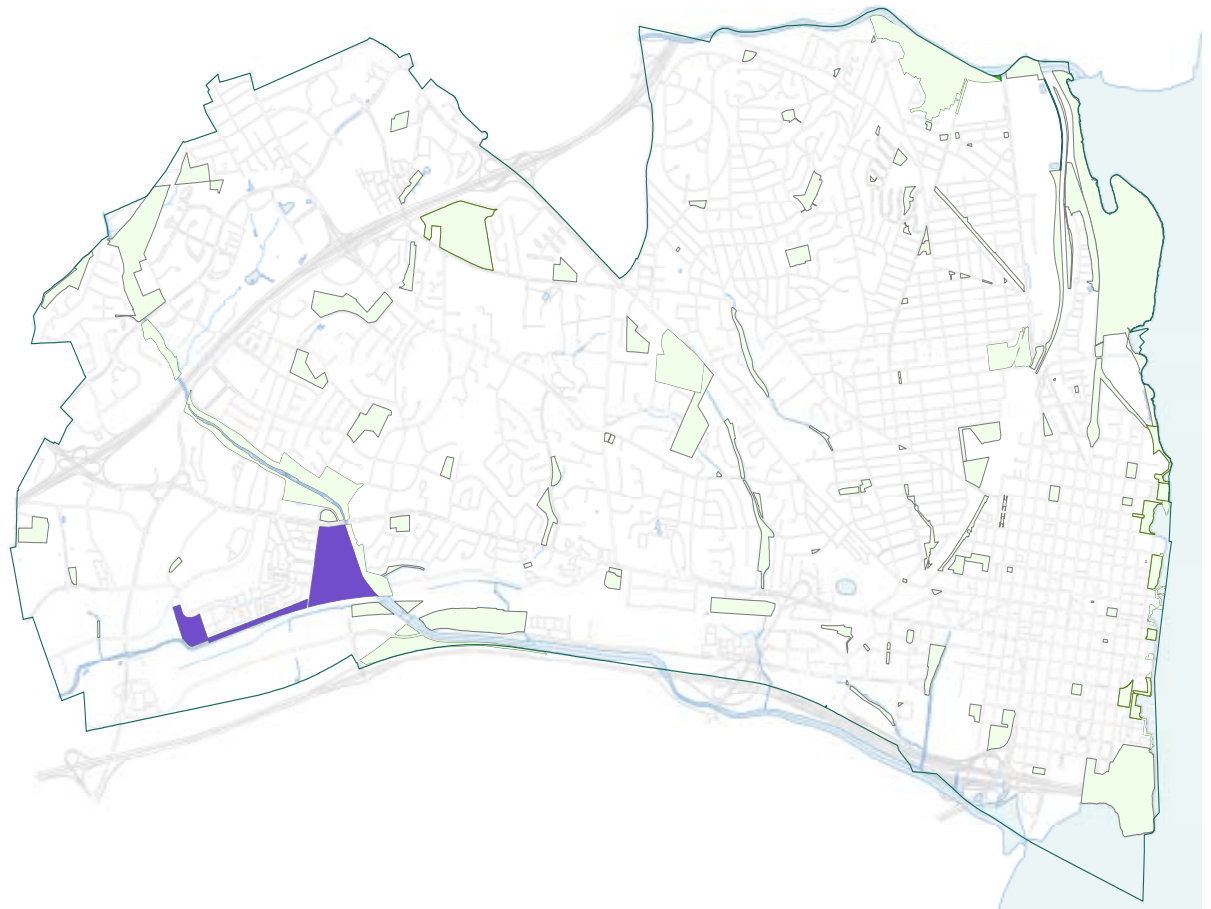
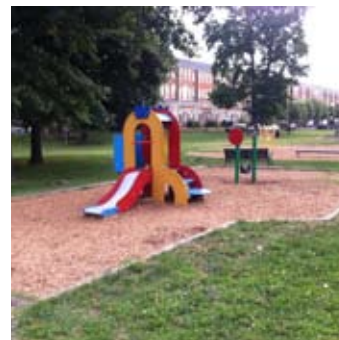


BEN BRENNMAN PARK

ARMISTEAD L. BOOTHE PARK

CAMERON STATION LINEAR PARK





Background

Ben Brenman (48.33 acres) and Armistead L. Boothe (10.81 acres) Parks are very popular destinations for many people who live in the West End residential areas, as well as sports users from around the City who travel to the Park to use the athletic fields and/or attend special events. A linear trail, Cameron Station Linear Park, connects the two parks along the south side of Cameron Station. Throughout the 19th century, both Parks were a part of property known as the “Meadows,” a 254-acre marshland. In the 20th century, the land was cultivated into agricultural fields and then used as the location for the Cameron Station Quartermaster Depot by the US Army Quartermaster Corps from 1941 until 1996.

In 1992, City Council adopted the Cameron Station Coordinated Development District (CCD) that included Ben Brenman and Boothe Parks, in conjunction with Cameron Station. Both sections of parkland were conveyed to the City of Alexandria through the Federal Land to Park Program of the United States Department of the Interior for use by the general public. In 1996, the sites were re-developed into parks as part of the CDD. The CDD plan also included the construction of the Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School adjacent to Boothe Park.

The City named each Park after esteemed Alexandrians whose civic activism enriched the quality of life for residents of the community. Armistead L. Boothe was a native Alexandrian who served as a special assistant in the United States Office of Attorney General (1934-1936) and as a City Attorney of Alexandria (1938-1943). Boothe was a strong advocate for public school integration in the 1950s. Colonel Ben Brenman contributed his time and talent as an Alexandrian activist for over 30 years and was involved in many public projects, including the acquisition of the Brenman and Boothe parklands. Now the care and dedication of these two men are imbued in the Brenman and Boothe Park system, a well-liked public space that will continue to serve as a haven for recreation in a densely populated, highly urbanized, area of the city.

City of Alexandria residents enjoy both Parks and their facilities throughout the day and night. As the Park Planning process revealed, the most common use of the Parks is “relaxing.” Individuals and families of Cameron Station and the Wakefield Tarleton neighborhood walk around the pond, visit the playground, and relax on the benches. On Saturdays, the Brenman Park Farmers Market is bustling, bringing in park visitors from all neighborhoods of the West End. The fields are also very active; the artificial turf rectangular field and baseball field in Brenman and baseball field at Boothe have lights and RPCA regularly programs them until 10:00pm.

Christiana's neighborhood park



Christiana Cole is an Alexandria native who attends Hampton University in Hampton, VA. Having grown up on the West End, Christiana often comes to Brenman Park to run by herself or with friends. She enjoys Brenman Park for its quiet open space and neighborhood feel, which makes it a comfortable place for her to run, walk, or relax with friends and family.

The planning process for this plan identified few areas of the Parks in need of improvement. In general, park visitors find the sites to be great assets to the City. However, the Brenman Park dog and picnic area, south of Cameron Run is in need of improvement. This area of the Park is located in an isolated area, over a bridge and behind dense trees and shrubs. Its location makes it difficult for Police to regularly surveil. Dog park users feel unsafe walking to the secluded area, particularly when visiting after work hours in the Fall and Winter. Moreover, the picnic area does not have facilities to attract families to rent the shelter, and the sand volleyball courts are rarely used.

Another area of the Parks that users identified as needing improvement is Boothe Park playground, which serves both children of nearby residences and the students of Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School. At time of writing (2013), its play equipment is outdated and far too spread out. Participants in this planning process desired

newer play equipment for a range of different ages grouped in areas that are accessible to the children of the surrounding area. Understanding the upgrade needs at this site prior to the park planning process, RPCA previously slated the Boothe playground for renovation in fiscal year 2013, including new rubber safety surfacing and play equipment and consolidation of equipment. Construction is expected in 2014.

The Brenman stormwater management pond provides a unique water asset to the park while also serving as a stormwater quality basin. The pond collects rainwater runoff traveling through the city storm sewers and then treats the water by trapping it and allowing the pollutants to settle out before the water is discharged into Backlick Run and on to the Potomac River. The small ponded area west of the pedestrian bridge is designed to function as a forebay and capture trash and sediment prior to it entering the main pond area. However, as many respondents noted, the presence of trash is unsightly and often does

find its way into the larger pond. In addition, the trash rack located on the inlet pipe in the forebay is difficult to clean and maintain.

Furthermore, while some park users find them fun to watch, the flocks of geese that saunter around the pond often create a host of problems for the maintenance staff.





Community Feedback

From September through early December 2012, RPCA solicited input on the existing conditions and possible future uses for Ben Brenman and Boothe Parks.

Together information, RPCA held a public workshop to discuss park needs, distributed an online survey asking for feedback, and placed hard copy surveys in boxes located at entrances to the park and in the mailboxes of adjacent neighborhood homes. Staff also visited events and local businesses to hold “mobile workshops.” The survey asked park users to identify their usual point of access into the parks, the mode of transportation they use to get there, their typical park activities, what they like about the park, and what areas of the park need improvement. Survey participants also prioritized their improvement needs.

RPCA received 78 completed surveys. Of those surveyed, 52 participants lived in the 22304 zip code. Ten lived in the 22314 zip code; nine lived in 22302 and fewer than 5 participants lived in each of the other Alexandria zip codes or outside City limits. The majority of those who visit do so daily (28%) or weekly (34%).

This is what we heard:

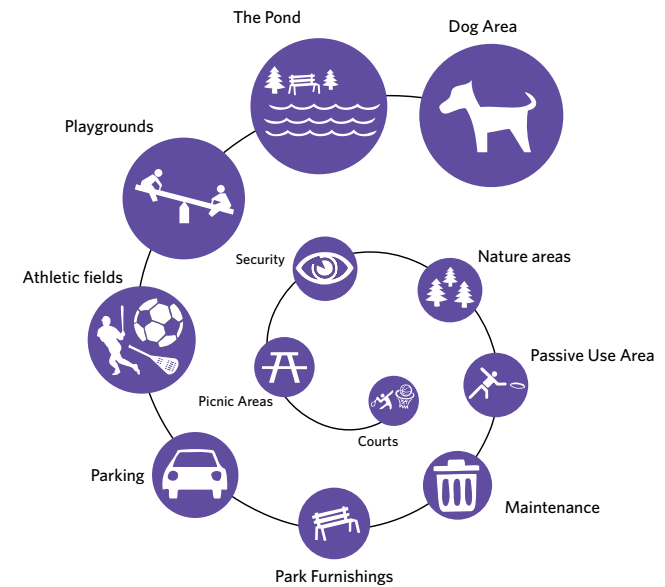
Fifty-one percent walk to either Brenman or Boothe Park; 42% drive and only 8% bike. This

high number of pedestrians demonstrates how Brenman/Boothe is considered a large park with a strong neighborhood use, attracting leisurely activity. It also implies the need to review safer pedestrian and cyclist access throughout the Parks. The high number of drivers is likely associated with the athletic fields, though many park users living outside of the Cameron Station neighborhood also drive to the Parks to walk or use other park features.

When asked, **“What do you do in the Park?”** the majority of participants stated that they go for unorganized, passive park uses. **The highest use was to walk (18%). Another popular answer was “relax” (12%).** These activities are multi-generational and can occur individually or in very small groups. The other responses were very closely ranked, including athletic field, dog area, and playground use, emphasizing the Parks multi-use nature. The only two activities that received responses of less than one percent were “use the basketball courts” and “use the volleyball courts.”

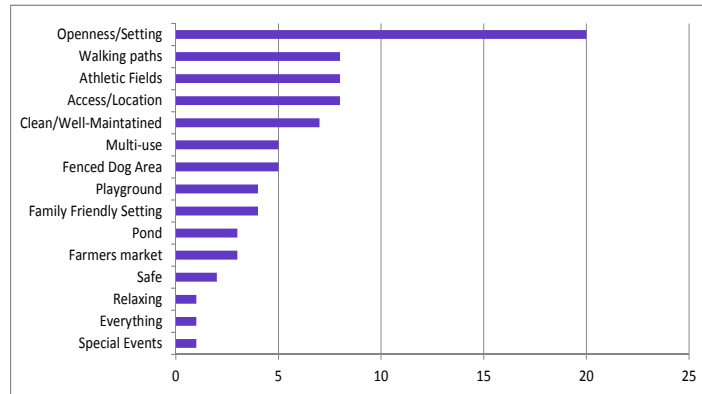
In answering, **“What do you like about the Park,”** participants overwhelmingly identified the open green space and setting of the park. All of the comments were emphatically positive, citing many reasons why people enjoy the park regularly. In particular, many respondents noted that there is

What needs improvement in Brenman and Boothe Parks?

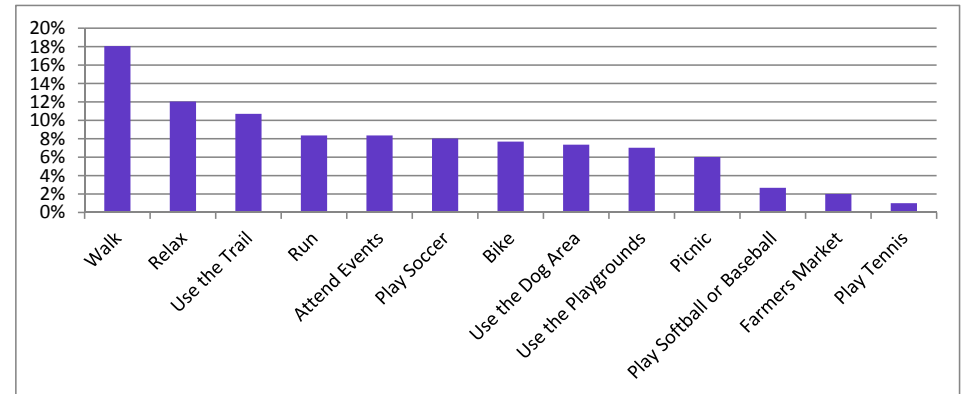


The highest priority is shown as the largest circle; the lowest priority is the smallest circle. Priorities are based on the number of responses to needed improvements and then weighted by how participants prioritized their answers

What do you like about the Park?



What do you do in the Park?



something for everyone in these Parks - children, adults, and pets.

There are some consistent themes throughout the various methods of community feedback. These include:

Dog Area

Participants in the workshop and the survey named the dog area and its surrounding landscapes as Brenman Park's highest improvement need. This particular area of the Park is very isolated and dog park users feel unsafe walking to such a hidden location, particularly when visiting after work hours in the Fall and Winter.

Stormwater Pond

The Brenman Pond is a working stormwater retention pond, fed by rainwater traveling through the City storm sewers, the pond treats the water

with aeration fountains before the water works its way to the Potomac River. The system is designed within the forebay to capture any trash traveling with the water before it makes its way into the main pond. However, as many respondents noted, trash often escapes the filters and the forebay enters the pond. The trash trap is difficult to clean and maintain.

Boothe Playground

Many survey respondents stated that the play equipment in Boothe Playground is outdated and spread out around the Park.

Wayfinding Signage

The Brenman and Boothe Park system is large and many people have trouble navigating around the Park and to certain activities. As suggested in the workshop, directional wayfinding signage would help visitors find their way around the Park

and give a stronger identity to the Park through coordinated graphics.

Park Furniture

According to the survey, one of the highest Park uses is "relaxing." To support this activity, respondents and workshop participants commented on the need for additional park benches, as well as more bike racks.

The Plan

KEYED LEGEND

1. IMPROVE CONNECTIONS TO HOLMES RUN TRAILS
2. RESERVE SPACE TO ADDRESS LONG-RANGE NEED FOR COMMUNITY CENTER
3. RENOVATE OPEN PASSIVE USE AREA
4. INCREASE BICYCLE PARKING
5. RETROFIT CAMERON STATION POND
6. OPEN VIEWSHEDS
7. RELOCATE MAINTENANCE BUILDING AND PROVIDE VEHICULAR ACCESS BRIDGE
8. ADD TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AND SHADE STRUCTURES
9. STUDY FEASIBILITY OF BIKE-FRIENDLY PATH
10. CONSOLIDATE FIVE SMALL PLAYGROUNDS INTO TWO LARGE PLAYGROUNDS
11. PROVIDE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACROSS TRACKS TO EISENHOWER AVENUE
12. HOLD LOCATION FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE SCHOOL GARDEN
13. PROVIDE DOG PARK LIGHTING (PUSH-BUTTON ACTIVATED, TIMED) AND EXPAND DOG PARK TO INCLUDE DOG EXERCISE FEATURES
14. LIGHT BRIDGE EXIT (MOTION-SENSOR ACTIVATED, TIMED)
15. RENOVATE COURTS TO INCLUDE MULTI-USE SPACES
16. INSTALL NATURAL PLAY FEATURES TO CREATE PICNIC ACTIVITY CENTER
17. PLANT TREES TO CLOSE GAP LEADING TO RAIL TRACKS



GRAPHIC KEY



Recommendations & Implementation Strategy



The pedestrian crossing from Ben Brenman Park to Duke Street is not visible and does not connect through the Park.

1

Improve connections to Holmes Run Trails

The City can strengthen the connection between Holmes Run Greenway and Ben Brenman Park. A more pronounced pathway along Duke Street with pedestrian traffic controls will significantly improve pedestrian access from Brenman Park to the Holmes Run Trail. An improved path with clearer signage and more accentuated park entrances will help to publicize the parks to people along Duke Street.

ESTIMATED COST: \$18,000 - \$22,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years



The original 1996 Park Plan identifies the Northwest corner of the Park as a location for a community center.

2

Reserve space for possible long-range need for Community Center

The West End as a whole is in need of indoor/outdoor active recreational facilities. This center would exist for community use and would likely offer services similar to those at other city recreation centers. A senior center was identified in the original 1996 Park Plan, but not implemented. Any new project of this type in a park requires a CDD/DSUP amendment, including significant community input.

ESTIMATED COST: N/A PRIORITY: Low PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 10+ Years



The open space north of the ballfields is used for passive activity, but the surface is not high quality.

3

Renovate open passive use area

This area is one of the largest non-programmed spaces in Brenman Park. Children and adults use this space for pick-up games, practices, and lounging. Retaining it as a passive use area will help balance the different activities in the park and provide recreational opportunities for non-sports team users. Increased maintenance and site amenities can help facilitate these uses.

ESTIMATED COST: \$78,000 - \$95,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 years (for renovation only, not maintenance)



There are a limited number of bicycle racks at the park entrances.

4

Increase bicycle parking

Bike racks installed at each entrance to the park will make it more convenient for park users to bike to Ben Brenman Park. With improved connections to the Holmes Run paths to the north, Ben Brenman Park could become a destination for recreational cycling through the West End.

ESTIMATED COST: \$2,400 - \$4,800 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1 - 3 years



The pond is a working stormwater filtration system.



A bridge leads to the South side of the Park, which is hidden behind overgrowth.



The maintenance shed along Deer Run Court is in very poor condition and is an eyesore to park users.



Respondents to the 2011 and 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment had a high demand for fitness equipment, like the chin up bars recently installed in Holmes Run Park, above.

5

Retrofit Cameron Station Pond

The small ponded area west of the pedestrian bridge is designed to function as a forebay and capture trash prior to it entering the main pond area. However, as mentioned throughout the planning process for this plan, it is the public's perception (and desire) that the trash should be intercepted prior to the forebay, preventing it from entering the pond altogether. Upgrades to improve pond efficiency and trash control are needed to keep the pond clean and to perform the required water quality improvement function. Educational signage can help explain the environmental benefits of the stormwater pond.

ESTIMATED COST: \$3,500,000

PRIORITY: High

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 years

6

Open viewsheds

As stated in the surveys and community workshops, many park users are reluctant to cross the bridge to the far south of Brenman because the area is secluded from the rest of the park. Other park users are unaware that this area exists. Opening clear viewsheds at each end of the bridge will better integrate the South area with the rest of the park and improve use of the space.

ESTIMATED COST: \$100,000

PRIORITY: High

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

7

Relocate maintenance building and provide vehicular access bridge

With the maintenance building south of Cameron Run connected by a vehicular access bridge, park staff can easily navigate maintenance vehicles through the entire park and equipment would be out of view from the majority of the park users. Locating the building on the other side of the stream will also provide a security measure by having employees keep "eyes on the Park" in the more secluded area. The new building would have the sufficient room and facilities that the current one lacks.

ESTIMATED COST: \$500,000 - \$675,000

PRIORITY: Medium

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 years

8

Add trail improvements and shade structures

More trail features such as seating and adult fitness stations, such as the new equipment in Holmes Run Park, shown on the left, will attract people to the area of Ben Brenman Park that connects to the Cameron Station Linear Park. Walkers will be able to track distance by following mile markers and then rest and enjoy a break from the sun under proposed shade structures along the trail.

ESTIMATED COST: \$52,000 - \$81,000

PRIORITY: Medium

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3 - 10 years



Many survey respondents were interested in upgrading the Cameron Station Linear Park to be more bicycle friendly.



RPCA is currently upgrading playground equipment in Boothe Park.



Boothe Park is parallel with Eisenhower Avenue but is separated by Cameron Run.



The community garden at George Washington Middle School, shown above, is managed as a Co-op.



The Brenman Dog Park is isolated and can not be viewed from the rest of the Park.

9

Study feasibility of bike-friendly path

The trail along Cameron Station Linear Park needs to be re-paved and brought to standards with clear directional and informational signage. The City will consider the feasibility of making the trail a bike-friendly path, since its current width is too narrow to accommodate two-way bicycle travel.

SUGGESTED ACTION: Include in 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

10

Consolidate five small playgrounds into two large playgrounds

The Department's Playground Renovation Program is currently renovating Boothe playground and bringing it into compliance with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standards for Public Playgrounds. The renovated playgrounds will include rubber safety surfacing, new play equipment, and accessibility improvements. Playground renovation is scheduled to be completed by Summer of 2014.

ESTIMATED COST: N/A

PRIORITY: N/A

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: IN PROGRESS

11

Provide Multi-modal bridge across tracks to Eisenhower Avenue

With this multi-modal bridge over the flume, park users could access Ben Brenman and Boothe Parks via the Van Dorn Metro Station. This new connection to Metro would also improve the commutes of West End residents living around the parks.

SUGGESTED ACTION: Multi-modal bridge included in Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan and will be further studied in the Eisenhower West Plan

12

Hold location for possible future School Garden

This garden would be the only one in the Brenman and Boothe Park system and provide an educational opportunity for the Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School community. It may also be used by the public if managed in a Co-Op system similar to George Washington Middle School's garden (shown on left).

SUGGESTED ACTION: Joint Community & School led project

13

Provide dog park lighting (push-button activated, timed) and expand dog park to include dog exercise features

With the timed energy-efficient lighting, the dog park will become a safer, more comfortable environment for evening use, especially in Winter months. Dog park users will be able to activate the push-button lighting up until the park officially closes at 10:00pm. The push button will make the lighting more energy efficient as lights will only be on when the area is in use.

ESTIMATED COST: \$64,000 - \$96,000

PRIORITY: High

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3 - 10 Years



The pathway to the South side of the park is very dark at night making it unsafe for those using the dog park and other features.

14

Light bridge and pathway (motion-sensor activated, timed)

The bridge and path lights along with the lights on the dog park will allow park users to safely access and exit the area of the Park to the south of Cameron Run. A motion sensor system will be energy efficient and also alert police and officials when the area is in use.

ESTIMATED COST: \$9,800 - \$14,000

PRIORITY: High

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3 - 10 Years



The existing volleyball courts, left, are unused. Sport courts will attract more users to the area.

15

Renovate courts to include multi-use spaces

Park users can choose to play one of the multiple sports that the new hard surface courts will accommodate, as shown in the example on the left. These new multi-use courts will economize on space and attract park users to the South Picnic Area, which is currently under used.

ESTIMATED COST: \$200,000 - \$300,000

PRIORITY: Medium

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3 - 10 Years



Natural play features, such as those shown above, can attract families to rent and use the park shelter in the South side of the Park.

16

Install natural play features to create picnic activity center

Natural play features, such as those shown on left, will enhance the picnic area and attract more family oriented uses and community events. The new picnic activity center will have a variety of recreational opportunities for kids and adults.

ESTIMATED COST: \$11,000 - \$15,000

PRIORITY: Medium

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3 - 10 years



Gaps in the forested area create unsafe entrances into hidden locations that are often difficult for the police to survey.

17

Plant trees to close gap leading to rail tracks

Planting trees or plants of appropriate native species in the gap near the picnic area will add tree canopy to the City while also keeping people from entering the forested area through openings.

ESTIMATED COST: \$3,500 - \$4,500

PRIORITY: High

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

Overall Preliminary Cost Estimates

The estimated cost range (in 2013 dollars) shown below includes two scenarios: 1) If the recommendations were implemented independent of other projects and include associated soft costs (contingency, engineering, survey, geotechnical, environmental, permitting) and 2) a cost scenario in which all the recommendations are implemented together.

The priority for each recommendation is shown as “low, medium, or high.” RPCA determined these rankings based upon three factors: 1) park user safety, 2) community prioritization feedback and the results of the 2011 and 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, 3) life span of existing facility.

The proposed timeline for each recommendation considers the project priority, the project cost with relation to the Department budget and contingent upon the Capital Improvement Plan, and the construction sequencing of recommendation amongst other park projects.

DESCRIPTION				ESTIMATED COST RANGES						
				If recommendations are addressed all together as package			If recommendations are addressed individually (soft costs are loaded in each item)		Priority	Timeline
WAYFINDING (Part of citywide project)				\$11,178	-	\$14,285	\$13,414	\$17,142	high	1-3 years
01 IMPROVE CONNECTIONS TO HOLMES RUN TRAILS				\$15,000	-	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$21,600	medium	1-3 years
02 RESERVE SPACE FOR COMMUNITY CENTER					N/A			N/A		
03 NORTHERN PASSIVE USE AREA				\$55,273	-	\$67,574	\$77,935	\$95,279	medium	1-3 years
04 BICYCLE PARKING				\$2,000	-	\$4,000	\$2,400	\$4,800	medium	1-3 years
05 RETROFIT CAMERON STATION POND				\$3,500,000	-	\$3,500,000	\$2,500,000		high	3-10 years
06 OPEN VIEWSHEDS				\$70,000	-	\$90,000	\$100,000		high	3-10 years
07 MAINTENANCE BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS				\$359,057	-	\$480,292	\$506,271	\$677,212	medium	3-10 years
08 TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AND SHADE STUCTURES				\$43,500	-	\$63,500	\$61,335	\$89,535	medium	3-10 years
09 STUDY FEASIBILITY OF BIKE-FRIENDLY PATH					Through T&ES		Through T&ES			
10 CONSOLIDATE FIVE SMALL PLAYGROUNDS INTO TWO					N/A		N/A			
11 PROVIDE MULTIMODAL BRIDGE ACROSS EISENHOWER AVE					Through T&ES		Through T&ES			
12 HOLD LOCATION FOR SCHOOL GARDEN					N/A		N/A			
13 DOG PARK IMPROVEMENTS				\$45,888	-	\$67,944	\$64,702	\$95,802	high	3-10 years
14 BRIDGE LIGHTING				\$7,000	-	\$10,000	\$9,870	\$14,100	high	3-10 years
15 & 16 PICNIC ACTIVITY CENTER AND PLAY FEATURES				\$148,342	-	\$207,297	\$209,162	\$292,289	medium	3-10 years
17 CLOSE GAP LEADING TO TRACKS				\$2,998	-	\$3,673	\$3,598	\$4,407	medium	3-10 years
UTILITY UPGRADES (Part of Citywide Project)				\$97,500	-	\$117,500	\$137,475	\$165,675	high	1-3 years
SUBTOTAL				\$4,272,737		\$4,650,066				
Soft Costs	CONTINGENCY			\$854,547	-	\$930,013				
	ENGINEERING			\$512,728	-	\$558,008				
	SURVEY			\$128,182	-	\$139,502				
	GEOTECHNICAL			\$85,455	-	\$93,001				
	ENVIRONMENTAL			\$170,909	-	\$186,003				
	PERMITTING			\$150,000	-	\$200,000				
GRAND TOTAL				\$6,174,560	-	\$6,756,593				